United Nations A/56/806–S/2002/140

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
4 February 2002

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session
Agenda items 42, 77, 81 and 166

Security Council
Fifty-seventh year

The situation in the Middle East

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 4 February 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a letter dated 3 February 2002 from Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, addressed to you, concerning unfounded allegations levelled by the President of the United States of America against the Islamic Republic of Iran in his State of the Union address (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 42, 77, 81 and 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Hadi **Nejad-Hosseinian**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 4 February 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to refer to the State of the Union address by the President of the United States on 29 January 2002 and express grave disappointment about its overall approach, as well as strong indignation about the parts in which unfounded allegations were made against my country or where the President used profanity when referring to the Islamic Republic of Iran. That these remarks were intended for domestic politics and seeking to substantially increase military spending in the United States are no justification for misrepresenting historic facts and events and one cannot but reject them as diversionary sensationalism.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is disappointed by the overall approach of the United States because, by promoting a self-centred, unilateral and naïve policy, which focuses only on the threat or use of force against what the United States has arrogated to itself to call terrorism, and leaving the self-evident global realities as well as the root causes of terrorism to the abyss, it tends to derogate from the cherished global momentum against this global menace. This United States policy undermines the global resolve to embark on a real and comprehensive war on terrorism. We are at the crossroads of history; a golden opportunity has presented itself to the international community to mobilize itself against violence and terrorism, which we shall seize with vision and foresight rather than unilateral, divisive, self-centred and provocative statements and actions.

The Islamic Republic of Iran recognizes that to seek freedom, justice and security for all requires realism and a multidisciplinary approach, developed in a deliberative process at the United Nations, to fight terrorism in all its forms. In this connection, immediately after the tragedy of 11 September, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed the convening of a global summit to eradicate terrorism and the Islamic Republic of Iran made further practical proposals to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in order to seize the momentum and help develop such a global and comprehensive approach to fight terrorism. We continue to be convinced that only such a comprehensive approach to fighting terrorism serves the interests of each and every nation on the globe. We stand ready to cooperate with the Secretary-General in such an endeavour.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a victim of international terrorism, has engaged actively in combating this menace. Iran was the first country to recognize and to warn the international community against the threat of terrorism and narcotic trafficking emanating from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and contributed in a most crucial manner to the emergence of the new reality in Afghanistan and the establishment of the Interim Administration. Furthermore, following the tragic events of 11 September, Iran has taken extensive measures to prevent infiltration and transit of terrorists into and through its territory.

The President of the United States accused the Islamic Republic of Iran of seeking weapons of mass destruction. It is ironic that a United States administration that has systematically engaged in the dismantling and undermining of all international regimes against weapons of mass destruction takes the liberty of levelling unfounded accusations against one of the foremost advocates of such international regimes.

It is indeed the United States that blocked the finalization of the protocol strengthening the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention, and whose total rejection of any multilateral approach during the Fifth Review Conference prevented the conference from reaching any result. It is the United States that is engaged in a systematic attempt to undermine the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. It is this very administration that has made the unilateral withdrawal from the ABM and rejection of CTBT as its most important crusade. And it is in fact the United States that has provided unreserved support and assistance to the arming of Israel, which is "the most dangerous regime" in the region and which routinely commits state-terrorism, including through assassinations, abductions and destruction of entire villages to terrorize ordinary civilians, with "the most destructive weapons" of mass destruction.

In short, this administration has made it abundantly clear that it does not seek transparent and rule-based multilateral regimes on weapons of mass destruction and wishes to remain unhindered not only in developing and proliferating such weapons but more dangerously in levelling self-serving accusations against others.

The Islamic Republic of Iran does not seek weapons of mass destruction and, unlike the United States ally in this region, is a party to the NPT, CWC and BWC and has signed the CTBT. As the only victim of weapons of mass destruction in the last generation, the Iranian people have felt the horror of these weapons and are determined to ensure that no other people will have to go through the same agony. We intend to pursue this objective by advocating and promoting a world free from all these inhuman weapons.

It must be underlined that, unlike the United States, weapons of mass destruction have no place in Iran's defence doctrine. Iran is fully committed to observing all relevant international instruments on prohibition of such weapons and its compliance has been repeatedly verified by the relevant international organizations. At the same time, Iran insists and vigorously pursues its inalienable right to develop its nuclear, chemical and biological industries for peaceful purposes. This right is guaranteed in all relevant international instruments and the deliberate campaign by the United States to arbitrarily deprive Iran of this right is a further violation of these regimes.

What needs to be investigated is the background for the sudden change in tone and approach of the United States officials. The massive misinformation campaign of lies and deception by Israel against Iran since 11 September and the public gloating of victory by various Israeli officials after the State of the Union address demonstrate the success of the current Israeli regime in highjacking the anti-terrorism efforts and changing it to unconditional United States support for occupation, brutal suppression and unbridled state terrorism against Palestinian people.

The United States support for the current Israeli policy is a strategic blunder. The Middle East crisis cannot be resolved with the use of force and repression and without the restoration of the inherent rights of the Palestinian nation, including its right to self-determination. The President of the United States must at least respect his own words in the same address and recognize that the Palestinian people have the same rights "unchanging for all people everywhere, ... the non-negotiable demands of human dignity, the rule of law, limits on the power of the State, respect

for women, private property, free speech, equal justice and religious tolerance". If "America will take the side of brave men and women who advocate these values around the world including the Islamic world", then American officials should do the same and avoid arbitrarily labelling as terrorists the very groups who struggle to secure these values including their human dignity and liberating their land from Israeli occupation.

By calling such groups and those who provide them with moral and political support terrorists or sponsors of terrorism, the United States is confronting the entire Islamic world, which has repeatedly and expressly condemned such attributions, including in the declarations of the Emergency Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on 10 October and 10 December 2001, and considers such accusations as the most pivotal impediment to a global fight against terrorism.

President Bush asked for the best weapons for United States fighters and the largest increase in the United States military budget in two decades. He also demanded that "all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security". In the context of his State of the Union address, such statements can only represent the prevalence of militarism, unilateralism and the logic of might makes right in the mentality of the United States official establishment. This attitude, which is the negation of the very foundations of the United Nations, represents a grave threat to global peace and security, and can provide an extremely dangerous precedent of international relations on the basis of might.

In contrast, the weapon of choice for the Iranian people is the strength of our argument, greater effort for dialogue and enhancing understanding, and making further sacrifices in the cause of freedom and justice. The people of Iran have demonstrated that they will not succumb to pressure, nor will they accept interference in their domestic affairs or insults against their institutions emanating from the Constitution, which provides that the affairs of the country must be administered on the basis of public opinion expressed by the means of direct or indirect elections. That should not be difficult for the United States to understand in the light of its own constitutional electoral process, and particularly the events of November and December 2000.

(*Signed*) Kamal **Kharrazi**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran